basic or in cellular service. The rates of telecom services are market driven in the present competitive environment in the sector. The call charges and tariffs vary among different operators and also would depend upon alternative tariff packages chosen by particular subscriber depending on his usage pattern. Therefore, a meaningful comparison with corresponding plans/tariff of basic phone *vis-a-vis* the mobile phone is not feasible. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) monitors these rates.

Non-Availability of BSNL Sim Cards in AP

1645. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the BSNL Sim Cards, for BSNL intending cellphone users, are not easily available anywhere in Andhra Pradesh due to their heavy shortage;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if so, whether Government would assure of supplying enough BSNL Sim Cards in view of heavy demand, at every centre, immediately before intending customers get diverted *en-masse* to other Private Communications Corporate Bodies; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Sufficient number of Sim Cards are made available to the Distribution chain limiting to the available network capacity at various stations of Andhra Pradesh Circle.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) and (d) BSNL is presently engaged in expanding the network by a capacity of 1,80,000 lines. Further plans have also been drawn to expand the capacity of tne network by 9,63,000 lines during 2005. The availability of capacities progressively would ease the process of providing additional connections.